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Strangerhood and Racism in Sports

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The practice of sport between different ethnic groups may lead to the experience of strangerhood, and forms of racism may find their way into sport. There are few satisfactory approaches toward explaining these phenomena, because insufficient consideration is given to the role of the body in sport. Since the body is a *fait social et culturel*, an experience of strangerhood may arise when people of different origins interact through the medium of the body. This is the focus of the first part of the article. The second part deals with the question of which social and political conditions lead to a racist perception and interpretation of bodily distinctions. In conclusion, an outlook is given of further questions to be investigated. It is argued that the sociology of migration and research into racism ought to devote more attention than hitherto to the social structures and the orientations of values in immigration countries.

The history of modern sport with such world-embracing festivals as the Olympic Games, world championships, and international sports meetings demonstrates how athletes from different countries and cultures and with different skin colors and religions can compete against each other. It is because of this interaction and competition that sport is generally regarded as an excellent means of improving understanding between people of different ethnic backgrounds. This view has long been held in classic immigration countries (like the United States) and is increasingly encountered in those nation states of western Europe that have become immigration countries (such as Germany). In the United States, it is even pointed out, for example, that sport has done more for the Black minority than any other social institution, such as church or school—a view seemingly confirmed by the successes of sports icons like Joe Louis, Wilma Rudolph, Muhammad Ali, Evelyn Ashford, Edwin Moses, Carl Lewis, Michael "Air" Jordan, and Gwen Torrence. Have not athletes of this caliber given an enormous amount to the world of sport? And have not their extraordinary achievements made unique contributions toward increasing the prestige of black people all over the world? Such positive views of sport are well received in western Europe, too, when mention is made of athletes such as Daley Thompson, Lindford Christie, Colin Jackson, or Ruud Gullit, all of them top colored athletes brought up in immigrant families.

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For rich western European societies, it is above all the socially integrating function ascribed to sport that also makes it politically interesting in view of the continuing pressures of immigration. The Federal Republic of Germany, with roughly 6.9 million immigrants, provides a good example of this. In normative political discourse, it is taken for granted that sport advances the integration of immigrants more than any other social field: "Sport speaks all languages" is the slogan used by the German Sports Federation (Deutscher Sportbund [DSB]) to try to harness sport as an educational and political instrument to cope with the social effects of immigration. However, the view of sport as an ideal means of furthering intercultural understanding has, over the years, congealed into a dogma. The belief that sport in itself is a universal, integrative practice that binds people together has become an epistemological obstacle for researchers in Germany, obstructing their view of phenomena that run counter to this: the strangeness that can arise in inter-ethnic sports meetings, and forms of racism that are carried onto the sports field, assuming features specific to sport. Only recently has there been any noticeable tendency to take up and inquire into such questions (cf. Bröskamp & Alkemeyer, 1996).

American sport research, by contrast, has long since disclaimed the views outlined above, and since the end of the 1960s has brought forth a great number of studies on the problem of racism in sport. The issues discussed in these analyses include patterns of segregation and discrimination. These have led, for example, to the fact that, despite being overrepresented in team games such as American football or basketball, Black professional athletes are rarely found in crucial, so-called thinking positions. Further, only in exceptional circumstances do African Americans have the chance of filling top positions as coaches, managers, or sports officials. Moreover, the intelligence of Black athletes is held to be lower than that of White athletes. In the 1980s British social scientists took up this line of research in an analysis of racist tendencies in English sports. In both countries the criticisms of scientists focused on the naive biologistic assumption that the dominance of Black athletes in certain athletic disciplines (such as sprinting) is attributable to hereditary traits, without taking the social circumstances under which top athletes are produced into account (cf. Cashmore, 1982, 1983; Coakley, 1994; Edwards, 1969, 1973; Jarvie, 1991; Loy & McElvogue, 1971; Maguire, 1991; McPherson, 1974, 1976, 1977; Talamini & Page, 1973; Volkwein, 1995; Wiggins, 1986; on Black sportswomen and the link between racism and sexism in sport, see Birrel, 1989; Haraway, 1982; Holzkamp, 1994; Lovell, 1991; Ng, 1992; Sloan, Oglesby, Alexander, & Frank, 1981; Smith, 1992; on college athletics, see Brooks & Althouse, 1993; Lapchick 1995). That even in the history of the modern Olympic Games a close synthesis has been reached between international orientations and racist thinking has been demonstrated only recently by John Hobermann (1990, 1995).

Studies in this area of research are readily accessible and have regularly been compiled in general surveys of the subject. As a contribution to the focus on "changing values in sport," therefore, in this article we place emphasis upon a further, hitherto neglected, aspect of the issue of strangerhood[1] and racism in sport: the body as a *socially* defined phenomenon. Although widely documented in the literature of the social sciences, the fact that in modern societies the body has become a crucial factor in symbolic distinctions has scarcely found its way into international research in the field of migration, ethnicity, and racism, nor is it taken into consideration in analyses of these phenomena. The creation of a whole field

of body-related cultural production crystallizing into increasingly differentiated spheres (e.g., medical or therapeutic services connected with health and sport, products of the cosmetic and clothing industries, counseling in questions of nutrition, dieting and body matters, the sale of diet pills), as well as a great number of new professions that capitalize on bodily competencies (e.g., performance fields such as dance, competitive sports, music, theater, the media, and show business) bear witness to the growing social significance of the body. At the level of cultural consumption, the domain of sport has developed into an arena in which the constant shifting of body-related values, patterns of perception, and judgment—as well as body attitudes, images, and practices—can be observed. Because the body is the privileged medium of action and presentation in sport, one finds that in sport, more than in any other field, the physical attributes of both partners and rivals can become, explicitly or implicitly, an issue of interaction and can attract great attention. In spite of this, neither sociologists of strangerhood nor of migration have undertaken any thorough study of these phenomena. Even if researchers of racism have investigated production of racist and biologistic worldviews and images of the body, they have rarely extended their analyses to the overall field of body-related production and consumption, nor have they attempted to uncover the links between both.

In view of this state of the research, sport can be regarded as a suitable point of departure from which to study questions of the connections between the body, strangerhood, and racism, and from which new areas of research can arise. The aim of our article is to show clearly how this can be achieved. We begin by outlining the approaches employed in German sports research oriented toward the sociology of migration. We then focus upon the body aspect of strangerhood and racism in sport. In conclusion we present certain perspectives for research that result from the following observations.

Sport in Immigration Countries

In the United States, the sociology of migration and ethnic relations has, for many years, been an established field of research in the social sciences. In European countries, in the wake of post-war migration, it has been developing in the same way and, especially since the 1970s, it has been gathering momentum (cf. Hoffman-Nowotny 1994). In this process, the reception of American research traditions—particularly with regard to theories of assimilation, acculturation, and ethnicity—has played an important role (e.g. Esser, 1980; Glazer & Moynihan, 1975; Gordon, 1964, 1975; Heckmann, 1981, 1992; Hoffman-Nowotny, 1973; Park, 1928/1964; Park & Burgess, 1921; Schrader, Nickles, & Griese, 1976; Treibel, 1990).

It is not surprising, then, that the efforts of North American sports researchers provided an important orientation for their German counterparts (this is especially true of the studies undertaken by Allison, 1979, 1982a, 1982b; Cheska, 1984; Day, 1981; Pooley, 1976). Accordingly, a distinction can be made in Germany, too, between approaches based on assimilation theories and those based on theories of ethnicity. Besides this, endeavors have recently been made to force migration research out of its isolation and link it more closely with current sociological discussions. The result has been, among other things, a praxeological approach to research on sport, migration, and ethnicity oriented towards Bourdieu's theory of

society, which places the corporeal dimensions of the experience of strangerhood in sport at the center of its analyses (Bröskamp, 1993, 1994; Gebauer, 1986; Gebauer & Bröskamp, 1992). Studies inspired by assimilation theories, ethnicity theories, and praxeological sociology are presented in turn.

Sport and Assimilation

In Germany the debate on an assimilation theory was taken up again at the beginning of the 1980s by Esser (1980, 1982) in his studies of the integration and assimilation of immigrants, ethnic groups, and minorities. These studies were oriented to the theory of action and formed the theoretical basis of Frogner's (1984, 1985) analyses of the "Significance of Sport in the Integration of Foreign Fellow Citizens [*ausländische Mitbürger*]." Her starting point was a skepticism, deriving from the findings of international research, towards global statements made by the DSB about "the" integrative function of sport. Such statements, according to Frogner, are far too optimistic. Unlike Pooley (1976) and Day (1981), whose research she takes up and continues, Frogner is not interested in the effects of ethnic *sports clubs* on the assimilation of active and passive members. Of far greater importance to her is the analysis of the influence of unspecified *active sports practice* ("sporting activities of all kinds"; Frogner, 1984, p. 354) on the assimilation and integration of Turkish immigrants in Germany. She argues that it is impossible for active sports practice to have significance in all aspects of the integration process; only in certain dimensions can sport play a role in assimilation. In order to discover which aspects these were, Frogner carried out interviews with Turkish immigrants. She arrived at the conclusions discussed in detail below.

Sporting activity among foreigners has no influence on structural (income) or identificational (planned length of stay) aspects of the assimilation process. Nor is there any noticeable correlation between sporting activity and personal integration (contentedness with life in Germany). Nevertheless, there is "a statistically significant positive relationship" between participation in sports and language assimilation (knowledge of German) on the one hand and—what is decisive in this context—between participation in sports and social assimilation (contacts) on the other. Sport, Frogner argues, has a positive effect on the frequency of contact with Germans in immigrants' leisure time (1984, p. 354). This is "of special relevance in social politics" (Frogner, 1984, p. 358) because primary contacts to members of the majority group are frequently considered in research literature to be "a vital prerequisite of all further integration (p. 358). The crucial significance of sporting activity thus lies, according to such an interpretation, in paving the way for interethnic contacts.

The basis for opposition to this point of view was already laid in the contact hypothesis put forward by Allport (1954), which has its origins in research on prejudice. The literature on this subject draws attention to the ambilavence and the risks involved in interethnic contact through sport. Accordingly, problems can arise in cases in which the athletes are not of equal status, in which common superordinate goals are not achieved, in which the prevailing political climate is generally unfavorable, or some combination of these (cf. Pettigrew, 1966; Rees & Miracle, 1984; Sherif, 1973). Sports contacts alone do not lead to friendly relations between groups, let alone to processes tending to lessen ethnic distinctions. There is general agree-

ment in American social research of the 1970s that the "ethnic factor" is by no means a relic doomed to extinction in the face of societal modernization processes. Research increasingly focused upon processes of establishment, maintenance, and persistence of ethnic groups (cf. Glazer & Moynihan, 1975) and upon the role played by sport in these processes (cf. Allison, 1979, 1982b; Cheska 1984). It took time for the issue of ethnicity to receive increased attention in European research on immigration.

Sport and Ethnicity

Until the end of the 1970s, it was characteristic for the discourse of both immigration politics and the social sciences in the "old" Federal Republic of Germany to describe the creation of intraethnic social systems and the spatial concentration of migrant groups in the urban conglomerations of the Federal Republic negatively as "ghetto formation" and thus view them as impediments to social integration. Similarly, the practice of sport in foreign national, ethnically homogeneous groups, whether for recreational purposes or competitively, was described as detrimental to integration (cf. DSB, 1981, p. 4). A departure from this point of view was first made possible by the development of theoretical concepts such as those of the "ethnic colony" (Heckmann, 1981) and "internal integration" (Elwert, 1982). Strengthening the bonds of "immigrants from foreign cultures within their own social surroundings, i.e. internal integration," can be, Elwert (1982) argued, "under certain circumstances a positive factor in their integration into the host society" (p. 718). Indeed, since the mid-1970s one can observe the rise of ethnic communities, institutions, and infrastructures in the "old" Federal Republic. Evidence of this is chiefly seen in the existence of church communities, schools, shops, restaurants, bars, and clubs—above all sports clubs (Heckmann, 1981, 1985).

Ethnic sports clubs, especially, are among the "largest types of organizations in the immigrant colony" (Heckmann, 1985, p. 27). These perform a similar function for their members to that served by the community as a whole in that the clubs provide members with a space in which they can interact in culturally familiar surroundings, temporarily freeing themselves from the stressful pressures of adapting and learning, which they are usually faced with. Heckman (1985) states, "Sheltering the individual from the dangers of isolation and anomie, the ethnic club constitutes a closed area of social intercourse, helps satisfy the need for primary group contact and can convey a sense of belonging" (p. 28). Moreover, empirical studies (cf. Romann-Schüssler & Schwarz 1985; Schwarz 1987a, 1987b) indicate that Turkish soccer clubs, which often attract large numbers of spectators and offer an impressive display of football, possess a representative function and provide an important means of identification for the whole ethnic group. Because of their high sporting standards, these clubs can contribute to a process of destigmatization and thus help to change the prejudiced image the public has of the minority (Heckmann 1985, p. 28). Indeed, the studies outlined above, along with further empirical findings (e.g., Abel 1984), clearly reveal that sports, especially soccer, occupy a central position in the leisure activities of Germany's ethnic communities. It must be added, however, that this applies primarily to the male immigrant population.

These studies reveal the important role ethnic sports clubs can have in forming and stabilizing intraethnic social systems, as well as furthering the social ac-

ceptance of the group. Although quite fruitful, especially when inquiring into ethnicity processes in organized sports clubs, this approach has its limitations because it overemphasizes the organizational level and underemphasizes the aspect of interaction in sport. This bias can be overcome, however, by drawing on the studies of Allison (1979, 1982a, 1982b) and Cheska (1984), which are more closely oriented towards theories of action. According to these authors, practicing sport is a form of actualizing culture; each ethnic group has its own understanding of sport, and these different understandings encounter each other in intercultural sports fixtures. This approach draws attention to a new aspect of sport in multicultural societies: not only misunderstandings but also the experience of strangerhood can arise. The flow of interaction in sport is susceptible to breakdown, especially when players have different expectations of sport and when their implicit knowledge of their fellow players' or opponents' cultural backgrounds is in contrast with reality. Constructing social reality in sport can temporarily lead to the danger of breakdown, possibly resulting in confusion and aggression among the players (cf. Bröskamp, 1994).

Bodily Strangeness and Praxeological Sport Research

Studies of assimilation and ethnicity have focused their interest one-sidedly on immigrant minorities. A sociology of migration should, however, simultaneously be a "sociology of the host country" (Hoffmann-Nowotny, 1973, p. 152). Only then can the analysis of processes of ethnicity and integration be linked with the study of indigenous class cultures and forms of cultural change in the host country. Such a shift of perspective would show the way forward in migration research, even one viewed from the sociology of the body, because it sharpens the awareness for conspicuous changes in the field of culture in modern societies: the rise of a wide variety of body fashions and discourses; phenomena like the aesthicization, eroticization, idealization or—on the margins—the brutalization of the body; and the fact that the body and body-related practices such as sport have become major fields of competition in the struggle for prestige, social standing, and symbolic power. In this process it is especially the symbolic functions of the body that have greatly increased in significance, the body having advanced to become one of the most popular and effective means of symbolically displaying social differences (cf. Bourdieu, 1982; Gebauer, 1982, 1986; Rittner, 1989).

These findings, however, have yet to be acknowledged by social researchers interested in phenomena of migration and strangerhood. It has not yet been sufficiently understood that no individual or group can opt out of the game of bodily distinctions—neither the indigenous nor the immigrant members of a society. In the perceptions of established members, the bodily habitus forms of immigrant families and their children are often regarded as unusual, alien, or strange, and vice versa. The attitude of immigrant members toward fashionable ways of presenting and showing the body that are taken for granted in German society is marked by ambivalence.[2] Situations in sport, in particular, can highlight this ambivalence, and a number of examples of this are given in the following.

In school sports, Turkish girls are expected to conform to the prevailing conditions, and this has repeatedly led to conflict between parents, their daughters, and the German education authorities. The problems result from how the body is

presented, as well as deployed, in swimming and physical education lessons. Not only is this rejected by some Muslim families, but in certain cases families have even taken legal action to obtain an exemption from sports lessons for their daughters on the grounds that freedom of religion is a basic right anchored in the constitution and that, among other objections, taking part in physical education lessons would infringe Muslim dress regulations (*Informationbrief*, p. 298). Superficially, the situation appears to be different in the case of Turkish boys, for whom sport is an attractive subject. However, physical education teachers often have difficulty in dealing with their Turkish pupils' presentation of masculinity through the body —the markedly physical habitus forms of adolescents—and the values linked with these forms like bravery and strength.

Analogous observations can be made at soccer matches between German and Turkish sides. The players go onto the field in the belief that they are playing the same game, but when actually playing, they realize that in practice interpretations of the sport may vary. There are widely differing views, for example, on the intensity of tackling and the extent of rough play that is acceptable and appropriate. The mutual "understanding with the body" (Bourdieu 1992, p. 205) is blocked in such cases by "systematically distorted communication" (Habermas, 1971, p. 137). This can produce feelings of unease, alienation, and hostility.

These examples illustrate that sporting situations can generate the experience of strangerhood, of which—inextricably linked with cognitive and affective dimensions—the body is one aspect. The praxeological approach to research on migration, ethnicity, and sport mentioned above makes it possible to study the bodily dimension of the practice of sport, strangerhood, and ethnicity because this approach is based on a view of society in which the body stands at the center of social theory. With the help of the conceptual system developed by Bourdieu, the duality of the social—incorporated on the one hand and objectified on the other—can be understood. According to this conceptual system, taste and symbolic capital exist in incorporated and objectified form, the term *habitus* denoting class culture made visible through the body. Seen in this light, the experience of bodily strangeness in specific situations is anchored in the profound structures of different codes of taste and forms of habitus. By no means restricted to intercultural exchanges, the phenomenon of bodily strangerhood can occur in the interaction between members of different social classes, especially on occasions when individuals make use of similar forms of practice or similar objects. The sole difference is that, between indigenous and immigrant populations, the development of bodily strangeness is slightly more probable, much more visible, and harder to ignore.

For the sociology of migration and ethnic relations, these findings signify the opening up of an important, hitherto neglected, field of research. If use is made merely of the theoretical concepts that have been available up to present, the corporeal/bodily dimension of relations between immigrant minorities and the indigenous majority population cannot be made the object of its analysis. Traditional approaches neglect the fact that "the socialised body . . . [is] not the opposite of society" (Bourdieu, 1980, p. 29) but one of its fundamental forms of existence. Taken seriously, these findings could provide fresh impetus for research not only on migration and ethnicity but also on racism. Before we return to this topic and outline perspectives for future research in the third section, we would like first of all to give a brief historical survey of the relationship between corporeality, sport, and racism.

Sport and Racism

Socially and culturally induced differences, both in the use and understanding of the body and in body techniques, are manifested in sport. When they clash, it happens under the pressure and at the level of sports *practice*, that is, often with no opportunity for conscious reflection. In this situation, the particular bodily attributes of both fellow players and opponents offer a wide variety of interpretation patterns. These bodily attributes may be perceived as an interesting and welcome enhancement, or they may be regarded as alien. They may arouse benevolent curiosity, but they may also evoke anxiety, aversion, and repulsion. Bodily features may, finally, be interpreted as the expression of a fundamentally different and alien "racial nature," which must be kept at a distance. Whatever the case may be, not only in the experience of strangerhood but also in racist interpretations, bodily particularities and the meanings ascribed to them play a major role. Racist ideologies, practices and acts often manifest themselves, of course, through the fact that they are directed at people with certain (static) phenotypic traits: a different color of skin, different texture of hair, different appearance, and so on. However, physical differences are not the precondition of the existence of racism, even if racist interpretations can be defined as such because of their references to them. Everyday discussions and interpretations of bodily features, even negative assessments, are not necessarily racist. They can, nevertheless, become racist under certain circumstances. The question then arises, which circumstances are these?

In discussing this question, one must first investigate a significant feature of racist views of the world and the body: corporeality perceived not as an indicator of social reality but as the visible appearance of "nature"; that is, the body (its movements, demeanor, techniques and capabilities) is assumed to be seen in dimensions unrelated to society, history, or culture. This "naturalistic" understanding of the body, which not only marks popular awareness but is also widespread in the cultural and social sciences, has a profound influence on the perception and judgment of what happens on the sports field. It provides a breeding ground for racial evaluations of sporting performance. Particularly in the interpretation of bodily appearance, movement, and achievement in sport there is, even today, a strong—although by no means inevitable—tendency toward "naturalizing the social." Among spectators, coaches, and even a great many athletes, as well as in the media, competence in different sports, styles of movement, and sporting performance are persistently attributed to anatomical, physiological, or psychical properties that are held to be inborn. Such notions can take a racist twist when the body—supposedly the nature of human beings—is interpreted as the bearer of a racial or ethnic essence and deciphered by means of such categories as blood or race.

Racial Anthropology and Sport

Such mythical patterns of interpretation, in which the individual appears as the bearer of a racial or ethnic essence, are deeply anchored in popular awareness. A great majority of people ascribe body-related differences in performance to an ethnic or "racial" nature instead of regarding them as indicators of sociocultural conditions. Notions such as these have even intruded into the world of sports science and play a major role, for instance, in research projects whose declared aim is

to study the relationship between color of skin, expressly understood as an attribute of race, and learning ability and performance in sport (e.g., Löcken, Letzelter, & Bayer, 1990). Even if the findings of such studies confirm that relationships of this nature cannot be proved, they nevertheless sustain the view that different races exist. The concept of race as a category of order is, however, held to be completely unacceptable by modern social scientists researching in the field of ethnic relations (cf. Edwards, 1973, p. 193ff; Hall, 1989a, 1989b; Miles, 1989, 1991). That race does not exist in the sense of hereditary, genetically determined differences in nature, whether with regard to capabilities or social character, has also been proved by geneticists (cf. Cavalli-Sforza & Cavalli-Sforza, 1994).

Nonetheless, long historical traditions and trends of research that are linked with the term *race* have survived. Indeed, the study of anatomical, physiological, and psychological differences between racial (ethnic) groups—especially those differences that seem to distinguish Whites from Blacks—is as old as Western anthropology itself. Using modern scientific methods to measure the body, anthropologists have been trying since the 18th century to discover significant differences between races with regard to the size and shape of the head, the anatomy of the body, bodily smells, the sexual organs, sensitivity to pain, or the sensations of the nerves (cf. Ehmann 1993; Fischer & Stumpp, 1989, p. 133ff; Hobermann 1990, p. 2).

Anthropological studies of this kind have also been carried out in the past in connection with sports competitions. During the 1904 Olympic Games in St. Louis, for instance, "Anthropological Days" were organized by the Department of Anthropology; the "days" were taken up by sporting events in which Africans, Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, Turks, Mexican Mestizos, and Eskimos competed against each other, the aim being to evaluate the physical and psychical capabilities of the individual "races" (cf. Spalding, 1905). Some 30 years later this kind of research reached its peak in the period of National Socialism. Taking advantage of the occasion of the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin, German race researchers also undertook studies with the aim of establishing a "scientific" basis for the construction of a mutually exclusive set of distinctions between the White and Black "races."[3] In pseudoscientific journals (e.g., *Volk und Rasse* [People and Race] and *Die Rasse* [Race]) countless articles were published in which Black athletes were presented as "wonders of nature," possessing properties such as great reaction speed, dynamic muscle contraction, and rhythmic talents, whereas White athletes were characterized as having "a fighting spirit," marked by great will (to achieve victory), intellectual sophistication, perseverance and control over the body (cf. Peiffer, 1993).

A classic example of such research is the study on "Sport and Race" undertaken by L.G. Tirala (1936), director of the Institute of Racial Hygiene at the University of Munich, the purpose of which was to "provide evidence that inventiveness and performance in sport [was] racially determined" (p. 6). Drawing on the creation of myths of ancient times, race researchers ascribed social and cultural meanings to real or even fictitious biological attributes in order to be able to define "otherness"—and, by association, to define oneself. The stereotypes created or confirmed by National Socialist anthropologists were not only disseminated in specialist "journals" but also publicized in the popular press, reported on the radio, and exhibited as photographs so that they could work upon the collective imagination. This categorization, made on the basis of "empirical" observation and popularized in the mass media, placed Black athletes in the domain of "nature" or "animalism" and White athletes in the sphere of "culture" and "humanity."

In such constructions, the "blackness" of the others reflects the "whiteness" of the dominant group. Everything that is wrong with one's own "white" self, everything that is dangerous because it threatens self-control (but is at the same time fascinating because it is forbidden for oneself and must be repressed) is projected by this "construction of race" onto the other race (on the process of racialization, see Miles, 1989, 1991; see also Fechler, 1995, p. 109ff; Hall, 1989b). As a result of this discursive categorization, within which physical attributes serve as carriers of meaning and as signs within a discourse of differences, the (athletic) contest between Black and White assumes the form of a struggle between "nature" and "culture," between "body" (*Körper*) and "mind" (*Geist*).

However, in the opinion of modern researchers of racism, the "construction of race" alone does not constitute racism. According to these researchers, one can only talk of racism as an ideological and social practice when the construction of races or ethnic groups serves to stigmatize the group formed by "the others" and to justify social, political, and economic measures that exclude these groups from access to material or symbolic resources (Hall, 1989b, p. 913). From this point of view, such measures of exclusion can only be regarded as racist when they are carried out from a position of power, that is, when the "constructing group" has the power to enforce its definition or construction (cf. Fechler, 1995, p. 113ff.; Kalpaka & Räthzel, 1990, p. 4).

Unquestionably, this was the case in National Socialism. It must be pointed out, however, that in the constructions of the other "race" there was a certain ambivalence. On the one hand it is true that the physical attributes of Black athletes, particularly, were given negative connotations, whereas those of White athletes received positive ones. On the other hand, because Black athletes were consistently presented as specimens of mankind in its original state, as yet unaffected by civilization, and as incarnations of primitivist ideals of an intact natural state, they awakened a longing in "civilized" human beings for the original state: the Whites' own dreams of authenticity and naturalness were contained in the construction of the other "race."

In the light of this ambivalence in constructions of race, all approaches toward a theory of racism that consider the explicit negative evaluation of the "other" to be the determining formal characteristics of racism (e.g., Memmi, 1987; Miles, 1989, 1991) are in need of modification. Implicit forms of racism may also be expressed in attitudes toward racially discriminated groups that are ostensibly or actually benevolent. These include paternalistic ways of expressing solidarity, as well as exoticist idealizations (cf. Fechler, 1995, p. 114). Moreover, there is frequently another, reverse side to the language of discrimination and hate, consisting of an inexpressible desire of the "other" (cf. Hall 1989b, p. 921; Wulff 1986). Thus, it is important, not only *analytically* but also *politically*, to distinguish between xenophobia, racial hatred, and effusive idolization of "the other," between "negative" (derogatory) and "positive" (admiring the capabilities and beauty of black bodies) expressions of racism. At the same time it must not be overlooked that all these phenomena arise from the same discursive and symbolic world: they can overlap and strengthen each other (cf. Elfferding, 1989, p. 107).

The example of today's world of sports media shows that there are social spheres dominated by forms of positive, idolizing racism. Black athletes are presented as great victors, whose images are given the stamp of heroism. Stars of the international basketball and athletics worlds like "Magic" Johnson, "Air" Jordan,

and Merlene Ottey have become idols for many young people in Europe[4] who try to copy them—the way they dress, the way they move, their gestures, and their "cool" poses—in order to be able to share in their artificial charisma. It is occasionally claimed that this idolization works against racial discrimination by increasing the social standing of Blacks; but even if Black self-awareness can be nourished from the impressive record of success of Black athletes, then a price must be paid for this. For the world of sport is a world of the body, and although there are few people today who would claim that a Black man is half-animal, in the medium of the image, with the mass media and advertising furnishing pictures of black sporting heroes that stick in the minds of the people, ancient myths can live on under the surface. "The white man wants to be the brains and he wants us to be the muscles, the body," wrote Eldridge Cleaver (1970, p. 177) in the days of Black Power. The outstanding sporting record of Blacks attests to the validity of such categorizations. Together, the success of Blacks in sport, as well as their lack of opportunity in other areas, provide visible evidence of the purely physical existence mythically attributed to Black people.

Biopolitics, "Racial Hygiene," and Sport

Racist ideas, practices, and strategies by no means signify a return to the barbarity of premodern times. They are found in modern instrumental rationalism, a rational form of human economics that fits in perfectly with a belief in evolution, science, unlimited progress, and humanity's control of nature and that arose from the historical necessity of regulating not only the masses but also "free" individuals liberated from social hierarchies, adapting individuals to the political and economic conditions of modernity. This new political rationalism turns the body into an object for study and learning so that it may be improved and made to perform better and work harder. To denote and distinguish the technologies of regulation born from this rationalism, Foucault (1983, 1992, 1995) uses the terms *anatomopolitics* and *biopolitics*. He thus makes a distinction between (a) power technologies, which in occidental societies since the 17th century have been directed towards the *individual* body, with the aim of making it economically efficient and politically tractable (anatomopolitics: to be achieved in one and the same process on the basis of empirical, scientific knowledge), and (b) regulation technologies, whose target since the mid-18th century has been the *collective* body, that is, the population (biopolitics) (see also Reinfeldt & Schwarz 1993). According to Foucault (1983, p. 166), the main objects of these new intervening and regulating controls contained in the "biopolitics of population" are sexuality and reproduction, birth and mortality rates, health standards, and human life span.

This kind of sociotechnological intervention in the development of society, aimed at increasing not only the quantity but also the quality of the population, was based on a biologistic conception of society. At the end of the 19th century, biologistic concepts joined forces with eugenics, which derived from a combination of Darwin's theories of natural selection and evolution and Gregor Mendel's laws of heredity, rediscovered at the turn of the century and applied to human beings (cf. Haug 1986; Pfister 1993, p. 163). Whereas early social Darwinists had still believed in the natural progress of society through the "selection of the fittest" in the "struggle for survival," by the end of the 19th century, this hope was deeply shattered. Social problems and conflicts, the catastrophic living conditions in the

working-class quarters of the large cities, alcoholism, crime, diseases like tuberculosis—all the effects of capitalism, industrialization, and urbanization—were interpreted, in an ideological mixture of biologism, social Darwinism, and the doctrine of heredity, as unmistakable signs of major "degeneration" in the fin de siècle atmosphere prevailing in many European countries and in the United States.

At the same time, biological and medical interpretational models of sociocultural crises also prepared the ground for "therapeutic" interventions in social development. In the historical context of the development of a world market in which nations fought each other for markets, colonies, and spheres of influence, it was vital for industrial countries to improve the health of their citizens and make them stronger and more efficient. This presupposes that the integrity, superiority, and purity of the population is protected against heterogeneous elements: against all deviants and aliens who infiltrate the country in order to undermine from the inside the strength, health, and purity of the (national) social body. Two strategies are distinguishable in this social "therapy": first, the exclusion of the sick, the "perverted," and the "degenerate" (e.g. alcoholics, criminals, the mentally ill, sufferers from syphilis) from the reproduction process, and secondly, positive measures to improve "human material" (cf. Foucault 1983; Weingart, Kroll, & Bayertz, 1988).

Modern sport, which arose in the 19th century, can be placed in the biopolitical context outlined above. For one thing, sport was deeply rooted in the movements of social and cultural reform and "health movements," which all came under the heading "life reform"; for another, physical education was considered by the state to be a sociotechnological instrument in improving "public health," hygiene, and the "strength of the nation." Government campaigns to improve health, hygiene, and morals on the one hand and the endeavors of the life reform movements on the other frequently had the same purpose: since the "self-reform" of the individual propagated by the life reform movement was intended to serve as a model for the subsequent comprehensive reform of society, it had a certain affinity with biopolitical measures decreed by the state on social hygiene, eugenics, and—in Germany—"racial hygiene" (cf. Weingart et al., 1988, p. 68ff).[5]

German fascism was able to build upon earlier traditions, as well as on existing legislation (e.g. on the "Prevention of Hereditary Diseases"), and bind them into policies that rested on the twin pillars of "selection" and "weeding out," that is, both the encouragement and prevention of reproduction. Under the conditions prevailing in National Socialism, concern for the body took an explicitly racist turn and was used to endorse such notions as "public health" and "racial hygiene." Embedded in the overarching contrast of "race" and "counter-race" (*Rasse* and *Gegenrasse*), the campaigns designed to improve the "health," "beauty," "breeding," and "stock" of the nation's own "race" contained legally enforceable *practical* measures aimed at isolating and eliminating "racial aliens," "inferior stock," undesirables, and "dross" (on National Socialist body politics, see Alkemeyer, 1995a).

Although the measures of racial hygiene were aimed at both sexes, they had, as demonstrated by Pfister (1993), "specific and serious effects on women's fates and life circumstances" (p. 167). First, these measures bound women to the traditional role of mother. Second, the modern technologies of human economics (forced sterilization, incentives to reproduce, bans on contraception and abortion) were focused on the female body because of its function in human reproduction. Women,

moreover, who were not willing to conform to these measures were very quickly diagnosed as "social misfits" and punished, many of them being put into homes and sterilized. Women were also refused certificates of nonobjection to marriage (*Ehetauglichkeitszeugnis*) far more frequently than men on grounds of feeblemindedness.

Modernized Forms of Racism

In modern discussions of strangerhood, racism, and antiracism, there are many pitfalls. This is also true of the argument that (a) cultures (including class cultures), languages, and social institutions only exist insofar as they are "incorporated" (embodied) by individuals and (b) experience of strangerhood also possesses a bodily aspect. The danger inherent in this argument is that one can easily fall into the trap of culturalistic ontologization (i.e., "culturalism"; cf. Auernheimer, 1990, p. 126ff.). This is the case when a static concept of culture is used in an essentialist sense, that is, when culture is viewed as something unalterable, a closed identity, "something supposedly authentic which a group has in common" (Kaschuba, 1994, p. 187; see also Kaschuba, 1995).[6]

Many objections to culturalism have been raised. First, some argue that culturalistic positions fail to take account of the great upheaval which the ways of life of immigrant minorities undergo. Second, from new ethnic minorities, social units are constructed that are supposedly characterized by cultural homogeneity. This denies the fact that immigrant groups are caught up in processes of great social differentiation, resulting in enormous cultural change in their way of life and marked cultural heterogeneity. What is more, the often dramatic talk of cultural conflict veils the problems caused by social conditions and structures. Culturalism leads to the fact that sociological categories such as social structure, class or stratum, social inequality, power, and hegemony are omitted from the analysis.

Particular caution is called for when dealing with the political-strategic variant of culturalism, which has taken on the form of a modernized "neo-racism" (Balibar, 1990). The fact that racism in Europe has undergone profound metamorphoses cannot be overlooked (cf. Taguieff, 1992). The old concept of race has increasingly been replaced by the term *culture*, especially by the New Right in France and Germany, as well as by supporters of "ethnopluralism" (cf. Finkielkraut, 1989, p. 82ff.; Hall, 1989b, p. 917ff.). The political skill of the adherents of these positions—and, correspondingly, the difficulties for modern antiracist positions (on these, see W.F. Haug, 1992, and the discussion on methods in *Das Argument*, Volume 195, 1992)—lies in the ability of these positions to take over the formerly valid arguments of traditional antibiologistic, antiracist, and anti-imperialist criticism; reinterpret these arguments; and use these arguments for their own ends. For one thing, these adherents have adopted the criticism of the notion of biological and racial destiny, raised from the very start by researchers like Leiris (1951), and now speak, instead, of cultural destiny. For another, adherents of these positions have claimed for themselves the demands for the defense and conservation of "cultural identity," the "right to differ," and respect for others—demands originally directed against Western universalism and cultural imperialism in particular (e.g., that of the North American consumer culture).

For all intents and purposes these individuals now occupy positions formerly held by the Left (see also Fechler, 1995, p. 114ff). Instead of preserving

"racial purity," it is now a matter of defending "cultural identities." The right of "cultural identity" is allied with a "glorification of difference" (Taguieff, 1992, p. 236), that is, the premise that cultural differences are unbridgeable and that cultures are irreconcilable. Although each culture (understood as an unchangeable "essence") is granted the same right to exist, it is expected to exist within its own borders; that is, there is to be a strict spatial segregation, as opposed to a "universal mixing of cultures." The model propagated here is one of a heterogeneous world of homogeneous peoples, each group with its own living space. The borders around the "living space," allegedly vital for the conservation of "cultural identity," are to be defended, but there is a certain amount of flexibility allowed in defining these borders. Besides discourses focusing upon specific nations, there is also a new "European racism" (Balibar, 1992) intent upon protecting the entire "cultural sphere of occidental Christianity" against "aliens" and "intruders." This type of neoracism (along with culturalism) has been described in recent research as "racism without races" (Balibar, 1990, p. 28) and "differentialist racism" (Taguieff, 1988).

Since the body is viewed (not only in popular awareness but all too often in the cultural and social sciences as well) as the natural part of the existence of human beings, as opposed to their socially and culturally determined "minds," earlier biologistic and naturalistic attitudes, especially toward bodily activities like sport, still thrive. However, it is observable today that former antibiologistic and antinaturalistic views of a sociocultural, as well as a discursively produced. body are being taken up by adherents of ethnopluralism and the New Right, adapted to a culturalist doctrine and used in their own interests (a) by interpreting body-related values and bodily practices, techniques, demeanor, movements, gestures, and the like as the visible expression of an invisible cultural essence that is regarded as unalterable; (b) by pointing out the impossibility of bridging cultural differences; (c) by claiming that the acquisition and appropriation of bodily competencies is not a process, but instead, is the product of natural talent, heredity, and the like; and (d) in short, by regarding culture not from a sociological and historical point of view but by explaining it as given, ordained, and inexorable destiny.

Research Perspectives

In the introduction to his book *The Body and Society* (1984) Bryan S. Turner draws attention to the problem that, even in the minds of many sociologists, the body is reduced to a natural and biological object and that both of these aspects are associated and tied up with each other. "Any reference to the corporeal nature of human existence," writes Turner (1984, p. 1), "raises in the mind of the sociologist the specter of social Darwinism, biological reductionism or sociobiology." For Turner (1984), there is no doubt that these research traditions are merely analytical culs-de-sac "which offer nothing to the development of a genuine sociology of the body" (p. 1). However, among sociologists, too, the "sociological hostility to biologism . . . does result in a somewhat ethereal conceptualization of our being-in-the-world"(Turner, 1984, p. 1)—rather an unsatisfactory result when one considers the significance of the body as a fundamental prerequisite of human and social existence.

Against this background, analysis of sport, whether a social scientific, historical-anthropological, or philosophical in approach, can be regarded as a

suitable starting point from which to reflect upon more general connections between corporeality, strangerhood, and racism. The sociology of the stranger has only rarely taken into consideration that the "other" is always bodily present in face-to-face interactions, that definitions of the "self" and the "other" have a bodily dimension, and that experience of strangerhood can possess a bodily aspect. These phenomena are not to be confused with racism, and research can be carried out into them *without necessarily* falling into the traps of culturalism and biologism. Beyond this, leading on from the premise that bodily forms of habitus are products of social conditions of human existence, questions could be considered that have hitherto been neglected in the study of racism.

For example, racist discourse in its earlier, biologistic form, is characterized, among other things, by the fact that it declares people or groups of people to be inferior products of their bodies. Research on racism has conclusively demonstrated that this position is untenable. Rarely, however, has research gone beyond this and looked into the question of the social production of the body and its social forming. Seen from the perspective of the social sciences, the questions raised relate to what the social sphere does to bodies: (a) how the social sphere uses, changes, transforms, produces, constructs, and deciphers bodies; (b) what techniques and means are employed to achieve all these things; (c) what forms of body practice, disciplining, and manipulation play decisive roles; (d) how the body is stamped through social interaction; and (e) what part the body itself plays in appropriating and incorporating the social sphere. It lies in the nature of things that sport can have a substantial share in all these processes by means of a great variety of methods, for example, as an element of biopolitical power strategy, as a pedagogical factor in an education of the body, or as a technique of shaping the body.

Indeed, the analysis of the whole field of body-related cultural production and consumption beyond sport would be of great interest. Basically, this would be a question of analyzing the symbolic power that arises in this field and that is responsible to a large degree for promoting as well as asserting the social recognition of body ideals. The aesthetic modeling of the body through sport, influenced by the mass media and attributable to social and economic pressures, is perhaps most obvious in body building and body styling. It has also produced such inventions as "problem zone training" and manifests itself in the need for sports-related activity in surroundings in the style of halls of mirrors, for extreme sports, and the like. Driven by an ever-growing leisure industry, as well as by the disappointment and reluctance to carry on that quickly set in on the part of the consumer subjects, more and more new waves of body cults, fitness, and health follow one another in rapid succession. This is also of great significance for research on racism since the many different practices of modeling, aestheticization, and mobilization of the body are embedded in processes of the cultural reproduction of socio-economic structures (cf. Alkemeyer, 1995a). Moreover, the invention of, as well as the hunt for, ever new body ideals always serves to establish social distinctions and carry on the cultural reproduction of social hierarchies: "When body ideals are promoted to such an extent, when aesthetic excesses force themselves upon us from all quarters, when such forming of the body enters a spiral of risk, performance and crisis," writes Elfferding (1989), "the tendency to isolate and stigmatize body and 'character' traits which deviate from the norm grows. Here, *possibly (but not necessarily)*, is a cue for racism" (p.109; emphasis added).

According to Elfferding (1989), the conditions that must exist before one can really speak of racism are only given when practices and discourses relating to the formation of the body are joined by two further formations of practice and discourse in a complex relationship, namely, the discourse of people (*Volksdiskurs*) and the discourse of nation (*nationaler Diskurs*). The discourse of people is marked by the continuously repeated attempts to construct ethnic and cultural unity across class divisions; the discourse of nation organizes national identity in the vying of nation states with each other. Combining these two types of discourse with that of the formation of the body (which centers on body, health, reproduction, and gender) constitutes the formation of a racist syndrome. This is the overall construction that serves as a basis for the production of racist views of the world and the body and that, in connection with the developments in the fields of body-related cultural production and consumption, deserves further study. In doing so, researchers must take into consideration the reciprocal effects of political climate, socioeconomic conditions, and gender relationships—in other words, the interplay of classism, racism, and sexism.

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Notes

[1] The term *strangerhood/strangeness* is a translation of the German word *Fremdheit*. It is used in the sociology of the stranger and can be found, for example, in Levine (1979) and Shack (1979).

[2] A great difference does exist, of course, in that the old-established groups are in a much more powerful position. They control how things are defined and interpreted, and they allocate new members a certain place in the society. On the sociology of established group versus outsider relations, see Elias and Scotson (1990).

[3] Because of the international public present at the Games the National Socialist race researchers were conspicuously cautious about making anti-Semitic observations. On the construction of an image of the Jewish body in National Socialism, see Gilman (1992), Ehmann (1993), and Vertinsky (1995).

[4] There are noticeable differences, here, with regard to gender. Whereas the popular culture primarily depicts black women as "wild," "hot," beautiful, and sexually attractive (forming a contrast to "white innocence"), the black men are viewed as reflecting "genuine" manhood (cf. Hooks 1994; Volkwein 1995). One significant effect of this media exposure is that blacks are financially rewarded for their role presentating reactionary views on attributes of gender.

[5] On the connections between educational reform, physical education, social and racial hygiene, medicine, and eugenics in discourses of sport, see Nye (1982), Hobermann, (1984, p. 122ff), Alkemeyer, Kühling, and Richartz (1988-1989), Alkemeyer (1993, 1996, p. 62ff).

[6] Early German research on immigrants also fell into this trap: It attributed the life forms of immigrants directly to their culture or origin. This reduction led, among other things, to the demand that Turkish people living in Germany be offered types of sport belonging to their "traditional physical culture" (e.g., Roemer, 1988). Immigrants were thus stamped with and made prisoners of their culture of origin.